Bridge use in Mishicot sought by snowmobilers

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MISHICOT — Local snowmobilers want to keep the Rockway Street Bridge on their route, after the Mishicot Village Board closed the site to motorized traffic.

"The biggest problem is we really need that access," said Ann Shebesta, one of eight representatives of the Kettle Range Snow Riders who presented a petition calling for use of the bridge Tuesday to the Mishicot Village Board.

For several years, the club had access through the village park or by driving through property belonging to Fox Hills Resort and Convention Center, Mishicot Village Clerk Jim Bydalek said. But the resort denied access to snowmobilers this year, leaving the club with only the bridge as a major trail link.

The board agreed to close the Rockway Street Bridge Sept. 1 to motorized traffic. The site would be limited to pedestrian traffic only.

Ongoing safety concerns involve snowmobiles that depart the trail and enter private property, she said. But she said club members think there's room for both snowmobilers and pedestrians on the bridge.

"We're concerned about safety of the trail," Shebesta said. "That is our main concern, that the trail is safe and that it benefits the businesses of Mishicot."

The club also presented a 166-signature petition calling to keep the bridge open, Shebesta said.

The issue will be reviewed by the Park and Recreation Committee at a special meeting starting at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday at the Village Hall.

The bridge has been used for 20 years by the club without any accidents, Shebesta said. Although the state Department of Transportation considers cars, trucks and motorcycles to be motorized traffic, snowmobiles are not under that classification.

The link to Mishicot's gas station and other businesses is important to club members because it's the only stop between Two Rivers and Kewaunee, which is a distance of about 30 miles, Shebesta said.